



JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION



Editorial Message "Bridging the Gap"

A bridge – a structure built over a depression or obstacle for uses as a passageway. A gap- a blank space, an incomplete or deficient area; a wide difference in character or attitude; a problem caused by a disparity....I appreciate the bridges built by those before me – for on their shoulders I am now confident, strong, and tall. For these bridges to continue, we must build on their energy. We must do as they did: recruit, train, and retain a force that will someday continue on with business after we are no longer able. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "We've come a long way, but we still got a long, long way to go." My focus and purpose in "bridging the gap" for the next term will be to offer a different perspective and insight on how we could be more productive and efficient in our efforts – that is building bridges. While the gap has been somewhat reduced it still remains. Since assuming the position of Chair for Public Relations, I have made it my duty to engage as many JCA members, volunteers, Directors and staff to share their perspectives on our JCA "INFOCUS" Newsletter. The response was tremendous and well received by the Public Relations committee. As result our committee will act immediately on your suggestions by implementing your ideas. I am pleased to announce a new and revamped JCA Newsletter to be published the first week in November 2005!

I am excited about the accomplishments and gains that have been made. Thank you for compliments, encouragement, well wishes,
continued...

excitement and energy I received from you and others during visits to JCA events and meetings. I thank you for your trust and confidence in me as PR Chair. I know the organization is stronger as a result and more people are empowered. Our Public Relations Committee now looks to the road ahead as "leadership uncompromised," keeping in our forethought the indispensable resource and invaluable contribution of JCA Directors, committees, our staff, volunteers, and the entire JCA membership. I remain committed and willing to make a difference.

Respectfully,
Leo H. Campbell, Chair
JCA Public Relations Committee
E-mail Letters to the Editor
campbellmails@yahoo.com

Farewell to Consul General Vivia Betton



The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA), bids farewell to Vivia Betton at the conclusion of her term as Consul General for Toronto.

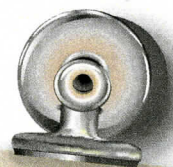
Indeed, it has been a privilege for the JCA to have had the opportunity to work with the Consul General on various initiatives. We express our sincere appreciation for the stellar work she executed to strengthen relations between Jamaicans in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) community and our homeland. As she moves on to greater heights, we wish her continued success and many blessings along the way.

Our sincere best wishes,
Sandra Carnegie-Douglas
President, JCA

Update from the Executive Director

With a combination of patience, tenacity, imagination, and an untiring commitment we experienced a very successful 1st quarter at the Association. We recognize the need to actively participate in building our community and having a voice on issues that promote healthy communities. JCA continues to transform itself by building strong leadership and earnestly ensuring that our services remain viable and accessible. We look forward to an outstanding year as we continue to deliver world class services.

Melody Brown
Executive Director



The Jamaican Canadian Association cordially invites you to attend the following events. Tickets will be available, please contact the reception desk at 416-746-5772.

NOVEMBER 12 –
ANNUAL YOUTH AFFAIRS GALA

NOVEMBER 19 –
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT TO THE JCA MEMBERSHIP August 28, 2005

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the staff of JCA, I convey greetings to you our members, friends and supporters. This has been an extremely active month for the organization. But then again, it has been an extremely active month for the entire African Canadian and Caribbean communities that we serve.



Through the thick and thin, your newly-elected Board has taken JCA into the midst of the activities. Whether it's the celebrations – JCA's 43rd anniversary, Jamaica's 43rd anniversary of independence, Keith Forde's promotion to Deputy Chief of Police responsible for Human Resources, Haitian born Michaelle Jean as Canada's next Governor General, Peter Sloly's promotion to Staff Superintendent; or responding to the more challenging events that have unfolded since the summer – the loss of some of the stalwarts in our community and loved ones of some of our members; the recent spate of violence across the GTA that has resulted in the loss of lives of many members of our community in particular, many of our young men.

Your newly-elected Board has hit the ground running. As we move forward to bolster JCA - to strengthen its economic and political base and to reinstate and strengthen its voice in the public arena, each of us must do our part to attain that vision – we are counting on your support.

COMMUNITY ACTION

In response to the spate of violence that has occurred and continue to take place across communities, the JCA, in partnership with the Black Action Defense Committee (BADC), convened meetings with representatives from various African Canadian organizations and individuals to discuss the situation and decide on a strategy on which we could take action as a community. Since the two meetings were held we formed a

coalition of 14 African Canadian organizations, and the number is still growing, to collectively respond and mobilize on actions to bring about systemic changes to the situations that give rise to the violence that is impacting our community and taking lives. The Coalition of African Canadian Organization's first official act was to convene a press conference on August 22, 2005 at the JCA Centre.

At its press conference the Coalition called:

1. For a summit to be convened with all three levels of government within the next 30-days to discuss and fully develop integrated strategies to address the issues raised by the Coalition;
2. On all levels of government, public institutions and the private sector to play a leading and continuing role in the funding of services and programs that impact the African Canadian community;
3. For better policing that is, among other things, accountable to an independent, public oversight body. To ensure community safety, the relationship between the police and the African Canadian community must be improved;
4. On all three levels of government to work collaboratively and hastily to identify the sources and methods of the supply of guns so readily available in our cities and to stop their supply; and
5. On the Ontario Ministry of Education and Boards of Education to discontinue the Application and Implementation of the Safe Schools Act which discriminates against and disenfranchise African Canadian youth.

The work of the coalition is evolving as we implement our strategic action. JCA continues to be an active member of this coalition.

On another note, the Board of Directors is in the process of setting its goals and developing the related action plan for this fiscal year. We will report to you at the next Quarterly Meeting in November, with components of the plan already underway. As a team we are focused on moving this organization to its full potential.

Sandra Carnegie-Douglas - President

Miss Vivian E. Betton, Jamaica's Consul General to Toronto At her Community Farewell Reception on Thursday, 25th August 2005

When I assumed duties as Consul General for my country three years ago, my mandate was clear. Protecting and promoting Jamaica's interests, ensuring that our citizens and others receive timely and efficient consular services, enhancing our country's image and interacting with individuals, groups, organizations and companies to assist in our national development, were all focal points.

Today, I can proudly proclaim that I have been faithful in carrying out my responsibilities. Entity Jamaica and Brand Jamaica are powerful stimuli for action. In our Jamaican Diaspora, our people at home and abroad, are creative, industrious and dynamic. As you know, the goods we produce are first rate like, "Blue Mountain Coffee."

My experience here has further validated all the positive thoughts I have had of our great country. The great cultural performances, paintings, art work, cuisine, music, fashion, a high standard of educational and sports achievements – all Jamaican stamped, fill me with hope and pride.

Let me express my warm appreciation to the High Commissioner, H.E. Carl Marshall for his excellent leadership of Jamaica's diplomatic team in Canada and for having earned the respect, admiration and support of all our people here, as well as that of the government officials of the host country at all levels.

My work as Consul General here in Toronto, has been greatly facilitated by interaction with hardworking, patriotic and dynamic individuals who represented our almost forty community and alumni associations.

I am grateful to all the organizations for their assistance to various institutions and projects at home. Be assured that they are appreciated by the Government and People of Jamaica. This includes the Hurricane Relief Committees, which were successful and the Jamaican Community Helpline Committee, still working feverishly to achieve its goal.

I am very grateful to the various levels of the Government of Canada: Federal, Provincial and Municipal for acting as gracious hosts. My heart felt thanks and appreciation to all of you. The glowing tributes today have sent a clear message; never give up on Entity Jamaica and Brand Jamaica, first rate people and products. My tenure here is reflective of what Jamaica is and can be, a great country; a giant nation.

The challenges our homeland faces will be overcome and your input in the search for solutions is central. As I say farewell, all glory and praise to our Almighty and Creator, from whom all blessings flow.

Your love, abiding faith and contribution to Jamaica are always recognized and appreciated. Remember to guide your youth, stay close to them, listen to them and instill the values our forefathers, which emphasizes an enduring respect for all people. Always try to foster and maintain harmonious relationships and be united as a people.

Let us always remember the theme for this year's Independence Celebrations: Forever United....A Strong Nation. (Excerpts from the Speech of Ms. Vivian Betton, Consulate General of Jamaica, provided by Jamaica Information Service Toronto)

JCA ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Presentation function will be held on Saturday November 19, 2005. Fifteen scholarships / bursaries will be presented to suitably qualified students including two from the JCA's Saturday Morning Tutorial Program.

Tickets for the function will be on sale soon and individuals are also being encouraged to contribute to the scholarship fund.



THE JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATIONS AND PARTNERS SPEAKS OUT AGAINST VIOLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

NEWS RELEASE

Coalition of African Canadian Community Organizations Speaks out on Gun Violence and Calls for a Summit with all three levels of government

Toronto, August 22, 2005: We have come together as a coalition of African Canadian community organizations to express our support and empathy for the youth, families and communities who have been impacted by the recent spate of violence across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). In particular, we express our deepest sympathy to those families who have lost loved ones. These incidents of violence and loss of life threaten our collective consciousness as a community.

We wish to make it clear that we consider the escalating violence and criminal behavior being experienced as unacceptable and a situation that must be of concern to all residents. These challenges to community safety cannot be allowed to go on unchecked and must be addressed under the provisions of the laws of this country.

We must emphasize however, that these activities are not disconnected from the broader and more entrenched socio-economic conditions that adversely impact our community. Limited opportunities; lack of access to jobs, services and programs; the increased targeting and systematic expulsion of our children under the Safe Schools Act, among other conditions, deprive our young people access to the privileges and opportunities afforded others in this society. These factors have left our community particularly vulnerable.

We believe that it is the collective responsibility of governments, institutions and communities to develop and implement strategies and measures that will address the systemic and root causes of youth violence and criminal activity. In addition, all three levels of government must act aggressively to determine the sources of the supply of guns that are being made accessible to young people and to stop the flow of these weapons.

We intend to fully engage all three levels of government, the police, the private sector, the media and our communities in developing a fully integrated response that empowers the African Canadian community to define and deliver community-based solutions. This must be done in a partnership in which governments and institutions, including the private sector play an enabling role in the funding of services and programs.

It is the fundamental responsibility of government at all levels to address the issues that continue to marginalize the African Canadian community and we look forward to and expect a strong and sustainable partnership between government, community organizations and our communities as we work together to safeguard and enhance the future of our youth and the African Canadian community.

The Coalition calls:

- For a summit to be convened with all three levels of government within the next 30-days to discuss and fully develop integrated strategies to address the issues raised by the Coalition;
- On all levels of government, public institutions and the private sector to play a leading and continuing role in the funding of services and programs that impact the African Canadian community;
- For better policing that is among other things, accountable to an independent, public oversight body. To ensure community safety, the relationship between the police and the African Canadian community must be improved.
- On all three levels of government to work collaboratively and hastily to identify the sources and methods of the supply of guns so readily available in our cities and to stop their supply; and
- On the Ontario Ministry of Education and Boards of Education to discontinue the Application and Implementation of the Safe Schools Act which discriminates against and disenfranchise African Canadian youth.

There is no need for further reports or studies. The time to act is now!

